

"The time is come," the Chairman said,
 "To talk of many things—
 Of C, A, T, and D, O, G,
 And whether snails have wings,
 Of pronouns, verbs, and picture-talks,
 And history's ancient kings."

This done—"Discussion now," she said,
 "Is what we chiefly need"
 (And begged her friends that it should be
 Conducted with all speed).
 "We hope to glean some useful hints
 Or names of books to read."

"But not from us," the students cried,
 Turning a little blue,
 "After our boldness that would be
 A dismal thing to do!
 For we had hoped, our papers read,
 To hide ourselves from view."

"Pray tell us of a useful book
 For little girl of four,
 Which gives one lists of dates and kings,
 Of commerce, trade, and law."
 With dignity reply was made—
 "Such text-books we abhor!"

"The Parents' Union never stoops
 To cram or ramify
 The youthful brain with barren facts,
 Simply to satisfy
 Examiners: but it imparts
 Ideas—to vivify!"

"Oh students," then the Chairman said,
 "You've told us much that's true!
 It's obvious you are members of
 The great P.N.E.U.,
 And now we know its value
 When it turns out such as you!"

L. M. G.

THE HOUSE OF EDUCATION CERTIFICATE.

THOSE of the students who have not already seen it may be interested in the following. It is the reply of H. Wilson, Esq., the artist who designed the beautiful certificate (Mrs. Dallas Yorke's gift to the House of Education), to the numerous students who have asked for an explanation of the design:—

"The subject is, of course, that of Education. The stream figures the stream of knowledge, the river of mental life flowing from beneath the foundations of the temple of the spirit in the middle distance. The temple is circular, symbolizing completeness and enduringness; above its altar is a lamp typifying the sun, the source of physical life; the dome symbolizes the heavens, and round the frieze are signs of the Zodiac. Behind the temple rugged mountains thrust their peaks into the sky, the top of the tallest passes beyond the picture to suggest that the highest peak is the unattainable—the ideal, and moreover, that the ends of knowledge are hidden—that while we may grasp a few threads, the end of the skein is beyond our reach. In the foreground Psyche clothed with knowledge and winged is seated. She is just embracing one of a group of children, to suggest that love is the inspiring and all-important agency in Education, only at its touch does the birth of the soul begin. This inspiring, inspiriting, inbreathing of the conscious soul is shadowed forth by the butterflies hovering round the children's heads. The figures themselves are seated on a little eminence; beneath it is a little beach on which the children are playing, some with shells, others with insects, with plants and flowers, or with animals, to suggest that in play each child follows its own natural bent, and gives not only a clue to its character, but valuable indices of the right ways of treating and educating the best side of that character. The border shows the tree of knowledge, with children playing in the branches; above, in

the initial letter, is seated the mistress instructing her pupils; below are shown the roots of the tree of knowledge among the rocks, with flowers growing everywhere; on the left are the battlements of the city which endures."

The chief danger, in designing such a certificate, is to keep down a natural tendency to allegorize to excess, and to make, instead, as much as possible of the opportunity for a piece of pleasant decoration. In the contriving of this the various ideas summarised above arose, and I attempted to give them fitting expression.

H. W.

TWO SUMMER HOLIDAYS IN FRANCE.

So many Amblesidians go to France at some time or other for the weeks of the summer holidays that some of them may be interested in an account of two summer holidays that I spent in Paris while still a student at Scale How. I saw two aspects of French life as different from each other as possible, for the first year I went to live with a French family, typical examples of *la petit bourgeoisie*, while the second summer I attended a holiday course for teachers in order to study the literature of the language and improve my powers of writing as well as speaking it.

The house in which I spent the eight weeks of the first summer is just outside the gates of Paris itself. I wondered, as my *fiacre* passed these and entered the district of *torbonniers*, what this strange region could be. I had been transported into a land of barrels. Barrels crowded the slopes of Seine ranged in long rows and leaving but little room for any thing else. At last, after traversing several of the narrow streets of Charenton le Pont over the round cobble stones, we drew up before a wooden door set in a great white wall on which was the legend "E. Florentin," "Vins et Spiritueux." When the gate was opened a little garden path was displayed, bordered by a narrow flower bed containing three geranium plants and one chestnut tree and the inevitable row of barrels. Very hearty and kindly was my

greeting, and very cordial the invitation to make myself at home and walk in "the garden," and enjoy the three geraniums, etc., *tant que possible*. The family consisted of Monsieur and Madame Florentin, and their sixteen-year old daughter Alice. Only the latter knew any English and I doubt if her vocabulary exceeded a dozen words. They had only four rooms in their house, three bedrooms and the kitchen, which was also dining and sitting room, but these were all kept beautifully clean and aired and we never felt cramped for want of space. I was made a great deal of and taken to see all the friends of the family, and very amusing some of these friends were. I lived quite the French family life, accompanied Madame to the market in the morning and spoke to the old market woman who came with her fresh fruits from Fontainebleau, and went out in the evening to walk in the Bois de Vincennes and take our after-dinner café *au frais* to the sound of music made by the many wandering minstrels, good, bad, and indifferent, that there abounded. I studied under the one chestnut tree, while Alice read "Le Veecaire of Vackfeeld" laboriously, and sometimes we read together, for Madame had a choice little library of French classics, which was always at my disposal. One day we had a delightful excursion to Joinville on the Marne, where a friend of Madame's lived in a tiny rose-covered cottage and kept a miniature farm, with a stock of one cow, one goat, two rabbits, and one donkey, of all of which she was very proud, as she looked after them entirely herself, besides attending to her clean little cottage, and her vegetable garden, flower garden, and poultry. All Madame's friends were of the type of bourgeoisie who work hard all their youth with the aim and ambition, dear to the French heart, of ultimately retiring on a nice little income and living in the country. Their children were educated, even in some cases cultured, but I was glad to see that their superior advantages did not make them consider themselves better than their parents. I used to help Alice sometimes with her studies. She had already taken her Brevet inferieur and was then working for her Brevet superieur. These examinations might be compared with our Junior and Senior Locals, but Alice seemed to study a great variety of subjects. *La Botanique* was included, but an attempt to interest Alice in Nature-Lore during one of our country excursions was not an

unqualified success. Her literary work seemed very good and I noticed signs of a very strong effort on the part of the teachers to develop originality of thought. Many of Alice's examination questions began with the phrase "*Quelles sent vos idées personnelles?*" Of course, I was continually being questioned on "how they manage things in England," and I realized my responsibility as a representative of the English generally, for such I was evidently considered. On one occasion I had an amusing opportunity of seeing ourselves as others see us. Some friends of Madame Florentin's went for a three days' excursion to England, during which time they learned, of course, *all* that could be known about our country. They walked with beaming faces into the little garden carrying a basket of mussels from Folkestone, and some seawater in a medicine bottle which was solemnly handed round for us each to sniff at, for as Madame Florentin said "*C'est très hygiénique. Cela vous fera de bon.*" The travellers had "done" London in two days with a professional guide. They told me several things about it that were certainly quite new to me. English girls, they said, dressed like men, always in coats, and collars and ties, and the inevitable boater hat, which, by the way, one never *does* see on a French head. They were lost in admiration of the English policemen and declared that they had found several who could speak and understand French. But I must not write more about my experiences at Charenton. If any old student ever wishes to spend a few weeks "off the beaten track," and to make some very real and true foreign friends, I shall be glad to give them any more particulars about my very pleasant first visit to the *charmant pays*.

The next year I went to Paris with the intention of studying more seriously. I attended the classes formed by the "Alliance Française," particulars of which may be obtained by writing to the Secretary, 45, Rue de Grenelle. I obtained a nice little bed-sitting-room in the Rue des Feuillantines, the street in which Victor Hugo lived for many years. I procured this accommodation by writing to the Paris Branch of the Girls' Friendly Society. The classes which I attended are intended as a holiday course for foreign teachers (that is, not French) of the French language. The lecturers are many of them teachers or lecturers at the Sorbonne. The classes are held for the months of July and August, and may be

attended during either or both of those months. They are attended by a most cosmopolitan set of people—Germans, Americans, English, Alsatians, Russians, and Swiss people were all represented. An examination is held at the end of the course and a diploma is awarded to successful students. The lectures are not very expensive, and the necessary books cost me at least very little, for I did most of my reading at the splendid public library, close to the Panthéon, and there found any modern books which were not procurable in the 2½d. editions published by the Bibliothèque Nationale. We had also organized visits with one of the professors to places of interest in Paris. One day we clambered over the roof of Notre Dame, and made personal acquaintance with the fascinating gargoyles, while we were told their history and that of the great stately old Cathedral itself. Another time we visited the Panthéon and the Eglise St. Etienne, which is, I think, sometimes overlooked by English travellers. In it is the tomb of St. Geneviève and a richly carved old "jubé," the last of its kind left in Paris we were told. Pilgrims still visit this church as in old days and St. Geneviève's tomb is surrounded by crutches and relics left by those who imagine themselves to have been cured by the Patron Saint of Paris. The Trocadéro Museum was also visited by us. Here, of course, there are few original examples, but the copies are very good and helped us to understand the history of French architecture and sculpture.

The students were very friendly and pleasant, and glad as we were when the anxieties of the examination days were over, I think most of us were sorry when our little coteries had to break up and disperse at the end of the course. The examination was, of course, not all joy, especially that part of it which was conducted orally. We are, perhaps, unfortunately less accustomed to oral examinations in this country than to written questions. I know that I still bear a very lively recollection of the scene when I went up. I could imagine the feelings of a mite being looked at through a microscope as I sat on the little bench where the examiner's desk loomed over me, and the examiner peered down at me like an eagle from a crag ready to pounce upon me any moment. The examination room is open to the general public if it chooses to enter, but fortunately it neglects or is unaware of its privileges for the most part. There were,

however, some terrible people behind us on this occasion taking notes of everything that was said. However, there is an end to everything including examinations and *c'est le premier pas qui conte*. The exam. happily over "good-bye" had to be said all round and our eight weeks' comradeships had to cease and, I think, as we parted, some to Switzerland, some to Russia, Germany, the United States, or to our own old England, we all felt how good it was to have been in touch with other peoples and to learn how much we have in common with people, who, on the surface, perhaps appear very different from ourselves, and to realise that foreigners, like kings, "Live by bread like you, feel want, taste grief, need friends," in short that they in all essentials like ourselves, in spite of their taste for *les escargots* and *les grenouilles* and their other little idiosyncrasies strange to us though perhaps no stranger than our peculiarities are to them.

D. N.

A TEACHER'S IDEALS.

THE higher the ideals with which a teacher has started the more likely is she to become discouraged at the difficulty of their realization. The greatness of her work, as a whole, becomes absorbed and obscured in the multitude of seeming trifles and details that go to make up practical life. In such a case the teacher must remember that nothing is unimportant in her work; at the same time she must be willing to follow Nature's lead. She must not let her plan of education (and she should have some definite plan, aiming at definite objects) become a mere system. She must not be discouraged because she only propose and not dispose for her pupils. If some of her means fail her aim may yet be advanced in other ways. If the object of education were merely to impart the knowledge of certain facts, to train certain faculties or events, cultivate certain habits of mechanical action, she might expect to fulfil these objects in a given time. But when she aims at helping a child in his start on an infinite career, at

opening to him infinite possibilities, she must not be surprised to find her work also vast and infinite. The more she does the more appears still undone, but this does not mean that there has been no progress. The teacher wants to arm herself against despondency by a vivid enthusiasm for her work, which must be quite distinct from personal ambition, a candid attitude towards others so that although she has opinions and methods of her own they shall not be exclusive, and a hopeful mind willing to do her best and leave the rest. To keep up their enthusiasm and interest teachers should communicate as much as possible with others, read educational works, and, as far as possible, keep some other good, though not necessarily professional, works on hand. The more objective interest she can bring into her own life the better it will be for her pupils, and the more she can keep in touch with others who are fired with enthusiasm in their work the more likely is her own enthusiasm to burn brightly.

PETER'S WINDOW.

THE window is open, but Peter's eyes are dim. The whole world seems to be waiting for someone to step forward and take the place of chief arbiter and foremost figure. One never sees how large a personality can loom till only its shadow is visible, and the translation of our late Queen to another sphere seems to have left the world saying—"And afterwards—what else?" Personal influence when exercised no longer through the medium of personality, but only by surviving ideas, is a fascinating subject—compare, for instance, without political bias, the influence to-day of Disraeli and Gladstone. The former's dream of Empire is now a solid reality, the latter's very followers are scattered and divided.

The other day, a child was repeating its "duty towards its neighbour," and produced the following:—"To love, honour, and *succed* (!) my father and mother." Verbally, of course,